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Involvement: Assessing Factors Contributing to 'Inactive Athletes' Persistence

Alec DeVries

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Involvement: Assessing Factors Contributing to ‘Inactive Athletes’ Persistence

A thesis

Presented to

The School of Social Sciences, Education & Business

Department of Higher Education and Student Development

Taylor University

Upland, Indiana

In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Master of Arts in Higher Education and Student Development

by

Alec DeVries

May 2019

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**Higher Education and Student Development
Taylor University
Upland, Indiana**

CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL

MASTER'S THESIS

This is to certify that the Thesis of

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Entitled

Involvement: Assessing Factors Contributing to 'Inactive Athletes' Persistence

has been approved by the Examining Committee for the thesis requirement for the

Master of Arts degree
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Abstract

The purpose of the study was to discover why students remain enrolled at an institution after departing from their athletic team. This study was conducted at small private, faith-based liberal arts institutions within the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics (NAIA). Forty respondents participated in a quantitative analysis inquiring about their experiences and satisfaction into their persistence at their institution of enrollment. Findings include the lack of support ‘inactive athletes’ received during their athletic experience, as well as the high value participants placed on their academic experience. Implications for future practice include, a continuous emphasis on student development and academic affairs programs, support for other extra-curricular activities, and development of assessment procedures for coaches.

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Tina DeVries

Who has inspired, supported, and loved me every step of the way.

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.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

As a nation, it is very important for people to have college degrees to meet the social and economic demands of America (Lumina Foundation, 2017). Earning a degree holds importance for developing not only economically but also socially, spiritually, etc. To help ensure a degree is earned, it is imperative that students persist once they enroll in a post-secondary institution. Persistence occurs when a student remains at the institution of enrollment from one year to the next until graduation. This can take place over the span of four to six years.

Involvement in extra-curricular activities such as intercollegiate sports has proven a vital part of students persisting within higher education. Multiple studies have shown a connection between student involvement and persistence (Astin, 1984/1999; Brewer, Van Raalte, & Linder, 1993; Tinto, 1993). According to Alexander Astin's (1984/1999) Student Involvement Theory, participation in sports—particularly intercollegiate sports—has an especially pronounced positive effect on persistence. Vincent Tinto's (1993) Model of Institutional Departure states, to persist, students need integration into formal and informal academic systems and formal (e.g., extracurricular activities) and informal (e.g., peer-group interactions) social systems. In essence, these two theories suggest the more involved a student is on a college campus, the more likely the student is to persist.

One might assume a student who departs from an intercollegiate athletic team would be more likely to leave their institution based on a lack of involvement. This could be because a part of the student athlete's identity depends on athletic activity and they feel lost without it (Brewer et al., 1993). In addition, student athletes may have chosen the institution because of the athletic team, and, once ties to the team are cut, they often leave the institution. In essence, students who are less engaged socially, athletically, and academically are less likely to persist at the institution (Astin, 1993; Kuh, 1995; Tinto, 1988). Persistence is positive in many ways. The persistence of student athletes prevents the possibility of those students losing non-transferable credits from one institution to the next. It also prevents additional challenges associated with transferring, such as experiencing a "culture shock" at a new institution or having to start all over again to make new friends.

Purpose

The purpose of the study was to investigate factors contributing to the persistence of inactive athletes at the institution of original enrollment. A secondary purpose of the research was to discover why athletes depart from their intercollegiate sports team. Weiss and Robinson (2013) defined inactive athlete as "enrolled students who has left their athletic team" (p. 91). The goal of this research was to use the discovered contributing factors of persistence, if any, to better invest resources such as time, money, and staff to keep inactive athletes enrolled. Most research has centered on large NCAA Division I schools. Due to the high level of competition and the amount of revenue generated (Berkowitz & Upton, 2012; Fulks, 2010; Sperber, 1990). This study focused specifically on National Association of Intercollegiate Athletic (NAIA) schools. Very

little research has been done at this level of athletic participation, making it important to add to the literature. Currently more than 250 colleges and universities are part of the NAIA, with more than 65,000 student athletes competing in some form of athletic program (National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics, 2016). For this reason, the following research question was posed: what factors contribute to NAIA student athlete persistence once they depart an intercollegiate athletic team?

Chapter 2

Literature Review

At its core, this study explored the relationship between involvement and persistence. Much research has examined these two concepts, and this literature review highlights key theorists on these concepts. This section is divided into four primary sections: role of athletics, Astin's involvement theory, persistence, and student departure.

Role of Athletics

Athletics have developed throughout history to become a huge part of higher education. “. . . [c]ollege sports have evolved from student-run athletic clubs to institution-led intercollegiate sports programs associated with national-level sport governance organizations” such as, the National Collegiate Athletic Association [NCAA], the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics [NAIA], or the National Junior College Athletic Association [NJCAA] (Kamusoko, & Pemberton, 2013, p. 41). Since the 19th century, collegiate athletics has grown immensely, specifically within the past 40 years. Collegiate athletics has become a multi-billion-dollar industry, and for some NCAA schools, it has become a large source of revenue (Letawsky, Schnider, Pederson, & Palmer, 2003; Vanover & DeBowes, 2013). In higher education, athletics have been used to recruit students, develop character, draw attention to the institution, build community as well as school spirit, and unfortunately has challenged levels of persistence (Beyer & Hannah, 2000; Bok, 2013; Letawsky et al., 2003; Miller, 2003;

Vanover & DeBowes, 2013). James Duderstadt (2000), President Emeritus at the University of Michigan, stated,

In the majority of sports programs, athletes are students first and athletes second. They achieve academic honors just as frequently as other undergraduates do. However, football and basketball do not. These sports have developed cultures with low expectations for academic performance. (p. 191)

Astin's (1984/1999) research positively correlates academic performance, specifically achievement, with persistence. There exist three main reasons to include athletics in higher education: 1) sports aid the overall development of young people; 2) sports contribute to increased academic performance and upward mobility; and 3) sports are a source of recruitment and revenue for post-secondary institutions (Miller, 2003).

Effects of athletic participation on academic performance. When it comes to academic success, purposeful engagement in academic and extracurricular activities have proven to affect academic performance positively (Astin, 1993; Crawford, 2007; Umbach, Palmer, Kuh, & Hannah, 2006). Astin (1993) claimed having regular faculty and peer-to-peer interactions leads to increased student satisfaction, especially in the way they perceive their connection to the institution. According to Crawford (2007), these interactions with faculty and peers are crucial in boosting student athletes' academic and athletic experiences. Umbach et al. (2006) compared student athletes' and non-athletes' academic support programs across different institutions. Despite the pressures and expectations on student athletes, they did not differ greatly from their non-athlete counterparts in terms of academic support use. In essence, their engagement in athletics had very little effect on their use of academic support. According to Vanover and

DeBowes (2013), “Student engagement provides an import function for retention of both athletes and non-athletes but may be of additional benefit for collegiate athletes” (p. 45).

Athletics’ role in school community. “The tradition of American collegiate athletics has always been coupled with defining how their incorporation impacts the academic mission of an institution” (Vanover & DeBowes, 2013, p. 40). Collegiate athletics allow athletes to develop skills such as teamwork, discipline, leadership, and persistence. Athletics also provide a sense of pride and unity for students, the university, and the community (Duderstadt, 2000). Intercollegiate athletics in the U.S. have become a focal point to the culture within higher education. Athletics are seen as cultural rites that express, celebrate, and affirm cultural values and beliefs (Beyer & Hannah, 2000). In many institutions, athletic events have become important “cultural rites” in developing community. Pregame pep-rallies, bonfires, banquets, and signing recruits all function as part of these cultural rites. For many students or alums of a university, simply “hearing one’s college’s fight song can evoke many emotions, ideas, and values associated with that school” (Beyer & Hannah, 2000, p. 109).

Recruitment. Competition has become a key component of higher education. This competition has created lots of intensity between institutions and has extended to almost every aspect such as raising money, recruiting students and faculty, and engaging in intercollegiate sports (Bok, 2013). Letawsky et al. (2003) built on this idea: “recruitment is a vital component for any college or university. Recruiting top student-athletes is even more strategic due to the potential increase in undergraduate admissions, and booster donations that a championship season may bring” (p. 604). Since schools’

athletic records are seen as a point of prestige, acquiring “blue chip” athletes through recruitment is a major concern of university coaches (Mathes & Gurney, 1985).

Astin’s Involvement Theory

Astin’s theory provides a simple approach for the academic and social development of student involvement while taking into account different environmental influences. In his 1984 model, Astin defined involvement as “the amount of physical and psychological energy that the student devotes” to an aspect of their development during college (Astin, 1984/1999, p. 518). Involvement varies depending on the student and manifests in different degrees and in different realms at different times (Astin, 1984/1999). Ultimately, Astin (1984/1999) argued if students are going to develop, they need to take initiative and put time and energy into their personal growth during college; as well, the institution’s mission plays a vital role in the process. Institutions can foster student involvement by making sure the effectiveness of their academic and non-academic policies and practices are rooted in Astin’s theory.

According to Astin (1984/1999), “virtually every significant effect could be rationalized in terms of the involvement concept” (p. 523). In essence, the more involved a student is on campus, the more likely he or she will stay at an institution of study, highlighting the importance of a post-secondary institution’s environment in student persistence. In comparison, if a student does not join extracurricular activities or sports or lives off campus, this lack of involvement can contribute to a student not persisting. Athletics is a prime example of Astin’s theory: “Athletic involvement tends to isolate students from the peer group effects which normally accompany college attendance” (Astin, 1984/1999, p. 525). Athletic involvement creates a bond between the institution

and the student. Attachment to an athletic team leads to greater satisfaction with student friendships and the academic/intellectual environment, which leads to a stronger retention and persistence rate.

Persistence

One of the mostly widely used measures in educational practice and research is persistence. Often, persistence is seen as a measure of institutional effectiveness. For example, *U.S. News and World Reports* Best Colleges in America display retention and persistence as key factors defining institutional quality. Tinto (2016) wrote,

For years, our prevailing view of student retention has been shaped by theories that view student retention through the lens of institutional action and ask what institutions can do to retain their students. Students, however, do not seek to be retained. They seek to persist. (para. 1)

Persistence and retention are often used interchangeably. The National Center for Education Statistics differentiates retention as an institutional measure and persistence as a student measure (Hagedorn, 2005). Scholars, however, debate this definition. The Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), the primary source for retention information, does not provide a separate definition for the word *persistence* (Voigt & Hundrieser, 2008). Usually, persistence refers to a student staying at a post-secondary institution for four years to obtain a degree. Voigt and Hundrieser (2008) with the organization Noel-Levitz defined persistence as “the enrollment headcount of any cohort (class) compared to its headcount on its initial official census date. The goal is to measure the number of students who persist term to term and to completion” (p. 3). For the purpose of this research, the Noel-Levitz’s definition of persistence was used within

the context of four-year degree completion due to students only having four years of athletic eligibility, excluding the special circumstances that allow a fifth year.

Tinto (2016) suggested three major experiences that shape student motivation to persist in college through graduation: self-efficacy, sense of belonging, and perceived value of the curriculum. “Self-efficacy is defined as individuals’ confidence in their ability to successfully complete a task” (DeWitz, Woolsey, & Walsh, 2009, p. 19). Students with high self-efficacy demonstrate high sense of belief in their ability to succeed and achieve goals (Tinto, 2016). Simply believing one can succeed is important for persistence but does not guarantee persistence. Students need a sense of belonging in their institution, as well as acceptance among their peers, faculty, and staff. Sense of belonging is the “psychological sense of identification and affiliation with the campus community” (Hausmann, Schofield, Woods, & Ye, 2009, p. 650). In other words, Hurtado and Carter (1997) contended that sense of belonging, “captures the individual's view of whether he or she feels included in the college community” (p. 327). Student success can be measured by how much students feel welcomed within the institutional environment. According to Tinto (2016), to have a perceived value of their education, students need to view the material as worthwhile learn and of value to them. Only then are they motivated to engage in the material in ways that promote learning and, in turn, persistence (Tinto, 2016).

Several studies have identified student motivation as a strong predictor of persistence (Ames, 1992; Caraway, Tucker, Reinke, & Hall, 2003; Dweck, 1986; Elliot & Healy, 2001). Ames (1992) associated “mastery goals” with many different factors linking effort to success. Mastery goals “are oriented toward developing new skills,

trying to understand their work, improving levels of competence, or achieving a sense of mastery based on self-referenced standards” (p. 261). Mastery goals also increase the time spent on task and one’s persistence in the face of difficulty. Caraway et al. (2003) found the use of intervention programs geared towards enhancing school engagement can help boost self-efficacy and goal orientation and reduce the risk of failure. Elliot and Healy (2001) focused on key factors influencing student satisfaction, finding several factors that students identify as important to their educational experience also appear critical for recruitment purposes. However, these factors are not the same for students’ overall satisfaction with their educational experience. In essence, universities might consider differentiating aspects used for recruitment strategies from those used in retention strategies (Elliot & Healy, 2001). With regard to intrinsic motivation, Dweck (1986) stated that “it has been noted that persistence in the face of obstacles is made more difficult within a performance goal because obstacles tend to cast doubt . . . hence call into question goal attainment” (p. 1042).

Student Departure

“Typically, past research has taken data from one time period, for instance, data on retention between the first year and the beginning of the second, to describe the process of institutional departure over the entire college career” (Tinto, 1988, pp. 438–439). Only taking data from the first year of college makes the assertion that students’ reasons for departure are similar at every stage of one’s college career (Tinto, 1988). In many cases, student departure “is contingent on the quality of individual’s perception of the degree to which those experiences meet his or her needs and interests” (Tinto, 2012, p. 45). Even the most mature students experience some form of difficulty adjusting to

college. Most get through with minor difficulty, but some students find this adjustment so difficult they depart from the institution.

Students experience difficulty for many reasons when adjusting to college. They may struggle to separate themselves from past experiences, such as high school friends, or may have difficulty separating themselves from family (Benjamin, 1990; Christie & Dinham, 1991). Difficulty usually arises when students struggle to adapt to the academic and social pressures of college (Christie & Dinham, 1991; Thompson & Fretz, 1991). “The first six months of college are an especially important period in student persistence and completing the first year is more than half the battle” (Tinto, 1988, p. 439).

Van Gennep’s (1960) *The Rites of Passage* describes life as a series of “life crises” and passages that lead individuals from birth to death and from one group or status to another. Van Gennep (1960) divided these passages into three stages, or rites of passage: 1) separation: 2) transition: and 3) incorporation. Each stage consists of a change in one’s interactions with other members of society. The first stage, separation, involves separation from past experiences and a transition from one group or status to the next. The second stage, transition, shifts to this new group or status where individuals learn new knowledge and skills to fit into their specific role in the new group or status. The third stage, incorporation, is assimilating or immersing oneself in the new group or status, establishing oneself as a group member (Van Gennep, 1960). Van Gennep’s work “provides a way of thinking about the longitudinal process of student persistence, and by extension the time-dependent process of student departure” (Tinto, 1988, p. 442).

Using Van Gennep’s stages of passages in terms of a college student’s career can help illustrate student departure and persistence in an institution. Tinto (1988) described

this stage of separation as similar to students who move away from their hometown and community to start anew at college. These students experience this separation when they disassociate themselves from these past experiences. In the second stage, the transition can cause serious problems for students attempting to persist in college. “Some students are unwilling to put up with the stress of transition because they are not sufficiently committed either to the goals of education and/or to the institution in which entry is first made” (Tinto, 1988, p. 444). Without assistance, many of these students depart without making any effort to adjust to college. However, once a student is through these first two stages, they can start incorporating or fully immersing themselves into the college environment. At this point, students are left to make their own decisions and adopt new behavioral patterns, social groups, and intellectual communities (Tinto, 1988). If students fail to integrate themselves, it may lead to their departure from the institution.

Summary

While little to no research exists concerning NAIA schools or “inactive athletes,” significant research on involvement and persistence does exist. Theories from Astin (1984/1999) and Tinto (1988) provide an excellent framework for the methodology of this study to assist with the exploratory nature of the research. Ultimately, multiple factors contribute to persistence and involvement of students. Thus, this study sought to add to the literature and to determine what factors lead to student departure from an intercollegiate athletic team within the NAIA.

Chapter 3

Methodology

Design

The purpose of the study was to determine what factors lead to inactive athlete persistence within the Crossroad League of the NAIA (Appendix A League). To determine this, the researcher utilized a quantitative approach. Quantitative studies analyze data to determine differences, relationships, or preference trends. According to Creswell (2003), quantitative research allows a researcher to collect data easy to enumerate. In this study, the researcher administered a survey with hopes of generating responses from a large number of participants. The following methodology reviews participants, procedures, instrumentation, data analysis, and benefits.

Participants

The study focused on sophomore, junior, and senior inactive athletes during the fall of the 2018-2019 academic year. The participants of the study came from five NAIA Crossroads League institutions in central Indiana. The study used purposeful sampling, which allowed the researcher to identify and target Crossroads League students who met the identified criteria (Creswell, 2003). Rosters were provided by each institution's athletic department coaches and staff to create the sample population. One hundred and twelve inactive athletes met the study criteria. The researcher received permissions from athletic directors and institutional review boards of the corresponding institutions to

identify students and distribute surveys in an online format. To ensure confidentiality, no personal identifying information was included on the surveys. Of the 112 invited participants, 53 completed the survey. Thirteen surveys were excluded due to partial completion, resulting in 40 fully completed surveys and a response rate of 35.7%. As seen in Table 1, the majority of participants identified as White or Caucasian students and were in their junior or senior year.

Table 1

Inactive Athlete Demographics

<u>Variable</u>	<u><i>n</i></u>	<u>Frequency/Percent</u>
Gender		
Male	11	27.5%
Female	29	72.5%
Age (Years)		
19	7	17.5%
20	8	20.0%
21	17	42.5%
22	8	20.0%
Race		
African/African American	2	5.0%
Asian/Asian American	2	5.0%
Caucasian/White	35	87.5%
Mexican American/Chicano	1	2.5%

Procedure and Instrumentation

Participants were asked to complete a variation of the Student-Athlete Satisfaction & Persistence Survey (SSP Survey) adapted from Sibongile Kamusoko's and Cynthia Lee Pemberton's (2013) work. Appendix B highlights permissions given from Kamusoko and Pemberton to use and edit their SSP survey to fulfill the specifics of the

current study. The SSP survey is divided into five sections: demographic information, athletic department policies and practices, educational characteristics, facilities and services, and persistence and the student-athlete. Appendix C provides a complete copy of Kamusoko's and Pemberton's SSP Survey.

The SSP survey is based on the authors' knowledge as well as an adaptation from the following existing instruments: Astin's (1993) Summary on Satisfaction with College Environment and Undergraduate Experiences, Unruh's (1999) Student-athlete Academic Performance and Persistence Student Survey, Ridpath's (2002) Intercollegiate Graduation Survey Mid American Conference, Marx's (2006) College Athlete Academic Experience Assessment, and the Noel-Levitz's Student Satisfaction Inventory (n.d.). The final instrument was subjected to expert review and pilot tested to ensure validity (Kamusoko & Pemberton, 2013). To keep the survey succinct and pertinent to the research question, the following sections of the SSP survey were removed: athletic department policies and practice, facilities and services, and educational characteristics. Questions were added to the instrument to analyze factors such as affinity with the institution, proximity to degree completion, injury, and involvement to assist in answering the research question. These adjustments were made due to the original survey's target toward Idaho State University student athletes as opposed to the "inactive athletes" surveyed in the current study.

The SSP survey was used for several reasons. First, this survey by Kamusoko and Pemberton (2013) is grounded in Astin's work on student satisfaction. Second, the SSP survey could be easily adapted towards inactive athletes. Since no existing instruments focus on inactive athletes and have proven validity at the NAIA level, edits to an existing

survey were necessary. Third, the instrument was chosen due to the depth of the questions asked on the SSP survey.

For the purpose of the study, the researcher divided the SSP survey into three parts. The first part of the survey pertains to demographics and uses multiple choice for students to identify items such as their age, ethnicity, gender, and sport played. The second part of the survey included 29 items in which participants answered questions regarding education characteristics, institutional facilities and services, and persistence. Participants were given choices based on a 4-point Likert Scale ranging from “very dissatisfied” to “very satisfied.” The third part consisted of three multiple-selection questions asking participants to identify their departure date from their athletic team, reasons for departure, and reasons for staying at their school of enrollment (Appendix D).

Chapter 4

Results

Using a quantitative descriptive analysis, the study attempted to discover what, if any, factors influence persistence of inactive athletes and what institutions can do to improve their processes. The following section discusses the quantitative results in response to the research question, after which a hypothesis was formed. The results section divides into four primary sections: demographics, educational characteristics, institutional facilities and services, and willingness to re-enroll or persist.

Demographics

The respondents' sport distribution proved fairly widespread. The biggest outlier was softball, made up 25% of respondents, which can be attributed to the gender disparity between males and females. In regard to GPA, the participants had relatively high GPAs throughout high school and college. Aside from two students dropping a tier from high school to college, no notable difference emerged. Descriptive statistics for the inactive athlete demographics such as sport played, high school GPA, and college GPA are reported in Table 2. The descriptive statistics are presented with the variable numbers (*n*), as well as frequencies or percentage for all variables.

Table 2

Inactive Athlete Demographics

<u>Variable</u>	<u><i>n</i></u>	<u>Frequency/Percent</u>
Sport Played		
Softball	10	25.0%
Basketball	6	15.0%
Tennis	6	15.0%
Cross Country	5	12.5%
Track & Field	5	12.5%
Soccer	2	5.0%
Baseball	2	5.0%
Football	2	5.0%
Golf	1	2.5%
Volleyball	1	2.5%
Current Cumulative College GPA		
2.0 to 2.4	2	5.0%
2.5 to 2.9	3	7.5%
3.0 to 3.4	11	27.5%
3.5 and above	24	60.0%
High School GPA		
2.5 to 2.9	2	5.0%
3.0 to 3.4	11	27.5%
3.5 and above	27	67.5%

No relationship appeared between major and student persistence due to the vast array of majors respondents listed. A majority of participants surveyed were juniors or seniors, demonstrated by the number of semesters completed at their institution of enrollment, with a majority (67.5%) of participants having completed 5 or more semesters. Of the 40 students surveyed, 95% planned to graduate from their current institution of enrollment while the remaining 5% were either unsure or did not plan to graduate. Notably, the 5% not planning to graduate had only completed 3 semesters. The

demographic trends proved consistent with the persistence data identified later in the study. Surprisingly, a little over half (55%) of those surveyed receive no athletic scholarship, potentially indicating those students participated out of love for the sport and that priorities were elsewhere such as academics or other extra-curricular activities. The remainder of participants received either partial scholarships (42.5%) or full scholarships (2.5%). There was no indication that students lost scholarships after departing from an athletic team. Descriptive statistics for the inactive athlete demographics such as intent to graduate, semesters completed, and scholarship aid are reported in Table 3.

Table 3

Inactive Athlete Demographics

<u>Variable</u>	<u><i>n</i></u>	<u>Frequency/Percent</u>
Intent to Graduate		
Yes	38	95.0%
No	1	2.5%
Unsure	1	2.5%
Semesters Completed		
2	7	17.5%
3	3	7.5%
4	6	15.0%
5	5	10.0%
6	13	32.5%
7	6	15.0%
Scholarship Aid		
Full Scholarship	1	2.5%
Partial Scholarship	17	42.5%
No Scholarship	22	55.0%

Educational Characteristics

The second set of 10 survey questions asked respondents to use a 4-point Likert scale to identify how their educational characteristics influenced their decision to stay at their institution. Respondents could mark “Very Dissatisfied” = 1, “Dissatisfied” = 2, “Satisfied” = 3, or “Very Satisfied” = 4. These questions sought to establish the satisfaction of interactions with instructors, campus safety, quality of instruction, the college community, and interactions with non-athletes.

The data revealed students generally felt “satisfied” or “very satisfied” with these educational characteristics of their institution. Across eight categories (student-instructor ratio, instructor support, overall college experience, grading policies, campus safety, instructors’ interest, quality of instruction, and fit within college community), on average students expressed general satisfaction with the educational characteristics of their institution, ranging from $M = 3.05$ to $M = 3.73$. Respondents appeared somewhat less satisfied with their “time available to build friendships with their non-athlete peers” at $M = 2.95$ and with their “opportunities to participate in nonathletic student organizations” at $M = 2.70$. In addition, notably, overall these educational characteristics show students value their education and academic programs, as indicated by their satisfaction with instructors, student-instructor ratio, and overall educational college experience.

Descriptive statistics for the inactive athletes’ satisfaction with the various educational characteristics at their corresponding institution is reported in Table 4. The statistics are presented with the valid or missing participant numbers (n), means (M), median (MED), and standard deviations (SD) for all variables.

Table 4

Educational Characteristics

Satisfaction with...	<i>n</i> (Valid)	<i>n</i> (Missing)	<i>M</i>	<i>MED</i>	<i>SD</i>
Student-instructor ratio	40	0	3.73	4	.45
Instructor support	39	1	3.54	4	.55
Overall college experience	40	0	3.40	3.5	.71
Grading policies	40	0	3.33	3	.57
Campus safety	38	2	3.29	4	.96
Instructors' interest	36	4	3.22	3	.76
Quality of instruction	39	1	3.10	3	.64
Fit into college community	40	0	3.05	3	.96
Time available to build friendships with non-athletes	38	2	2.95	3	.87
Opportunities to participate in nonathletic student organizations	40	0	2.70	3	.88

Institutional Facilities and Services

The third set of nine questions asked respondents to use the same 4-point Likert scale to identify how they felt institutional facilities and services influenced their decision to stay at their institution of enrollment. This section sought to establish the satisfaction of interactions with academic and career services, coaching staff, and other campus facilities. On average, responses fell below satisfactory levels. The only two categories found to have satisfactory levels were support from library staff ($M = 3.03$) and tutoring

services offered ($M = 3.12$). The remaining seven categories had means ranging from 2.33 to 2.76. Table 5 reports in full the descriptive statistics for the inactive athletes' satisfaction with the various institutional facilities and services at their institution. When asked, "How satisfied are you with your coach's interest in you as a student?" respondents on average indicated below-satisfactory levels (2.68). Similarly, when asked "How satisfied are you with your coach's interest in you as an athlete?" respondents on average reported below-satisfactory levels, as shown by the mean response of 2.76. Overall, these variables show that, despite below-satisfactory levels with their athletic experience, respondents remained willing to stay at the university.

Table 5

Institutional Facilities and Services

Satisfaction with...	<i>n</i> (Valid)	<i>n</i> (Missing)	M	MED	SD
Tutoring services offered	33	7	3.12	3	.98
Support from library staff	37	3	3.03	3	1.03
Sport competition facilities	38	2	2.90	3	1.06
Coach's interest...as an athlete	37	3	2.76	3	.64
Coach's interest...as a student	37	3	2.68	3	.70
Career counseling services	34	6	2.65	3	.94
Weight training facilities	39	1	2.62	3	.83
Team training services	39	1	2.56	3	1.17
Locker room facilities	36	4	2.33	3	.99

Persistence

The fourth set of 10 questions asked respondents to use a 4-point Likert scale to identify their willingness to re-enroll in their current institution. In comparison to the Likert scale used in the previous sections, the scale for these questions ranged from “Strongly Disagree” = 1 to “Strongly Agree” = 4. This section sought to establish the respondents’ intent to persist at their institution of enrollment.

The first half of the persistence questions focused on academics, and almost unanimously respondents viewed academics positively. In Table 6, the medians and mean scores show how much the respondents valued the importance of completing their college degree regardless of their departure from an athletic team. When asked to respond to the statement “It is important to me that I get my college degree,” the mean response was 3.95. The next set of survey questions focused on respondents’ athletic experience. Respondents viewed their athletic experience negatively, with most reporting their athletic experience was not what they expected it to be. This is evidenced by a mean of 1.95. In addition, most respondents were not satisfied their athletic performance since coming to their institution of enrollment, with a mean of 2.08. Overall, respondents seemed to place a higher value on academics than their athletic experience, hence why they persisted at their institution of enrollment.

Table 6

Willingness to Re-Enroll or Persist

Question(s)	<i>n</i> (Valid)	<i>n</i> (Missing)	M	MED	SD
It is important to me that I get my college degree.	40	0	3.95	4	.22
I intend to complete my Bachelors degree.	40	0	3.93	4	.27
It is of important to me that I get my college degree, even after I have departed my athletic team.	40	0	3.88	4	.40
I intend to enroll at this college/university next semester.	40	0	3.58	4	.90
Academics are my first priority	40	0	3.23	3	.83
If I had to start all over again, I would attend my school of enrollment	40	0	2.88	3	1.07
This college is what I expected it to be.	40	0	2.48	2.5	1.06
I am satisfied with my athletic performance since coming to my institution of enrollment.	40	0	2.08	2	.76
My athletic experience is what I expected it to be.	40	0	1.95	2	.81
Athletics were my first priority.	39	1	1.74	2	.71

Reasons for departure and persistence. The final section of the survey consisted of three multiple-selection questions asking participants to identify their departure date from their athletic team, reason(s) for departure, and reason(s) for staying at their school of enrollment. Of the 40 respondents, half reported the primary reason for departing was “Coaching Issues.” The second highest reasons were “Loss of Interest in Athletic Competition” and “Loss of Affinity for the Sport.” Of those who selected “Coaching Issues,” little overlap appeared with the second highest categories. Interestingly, eight of the twelve respondents who left due to their lack of connection with athletic teammates also reported a loss of interest in athletic competition.

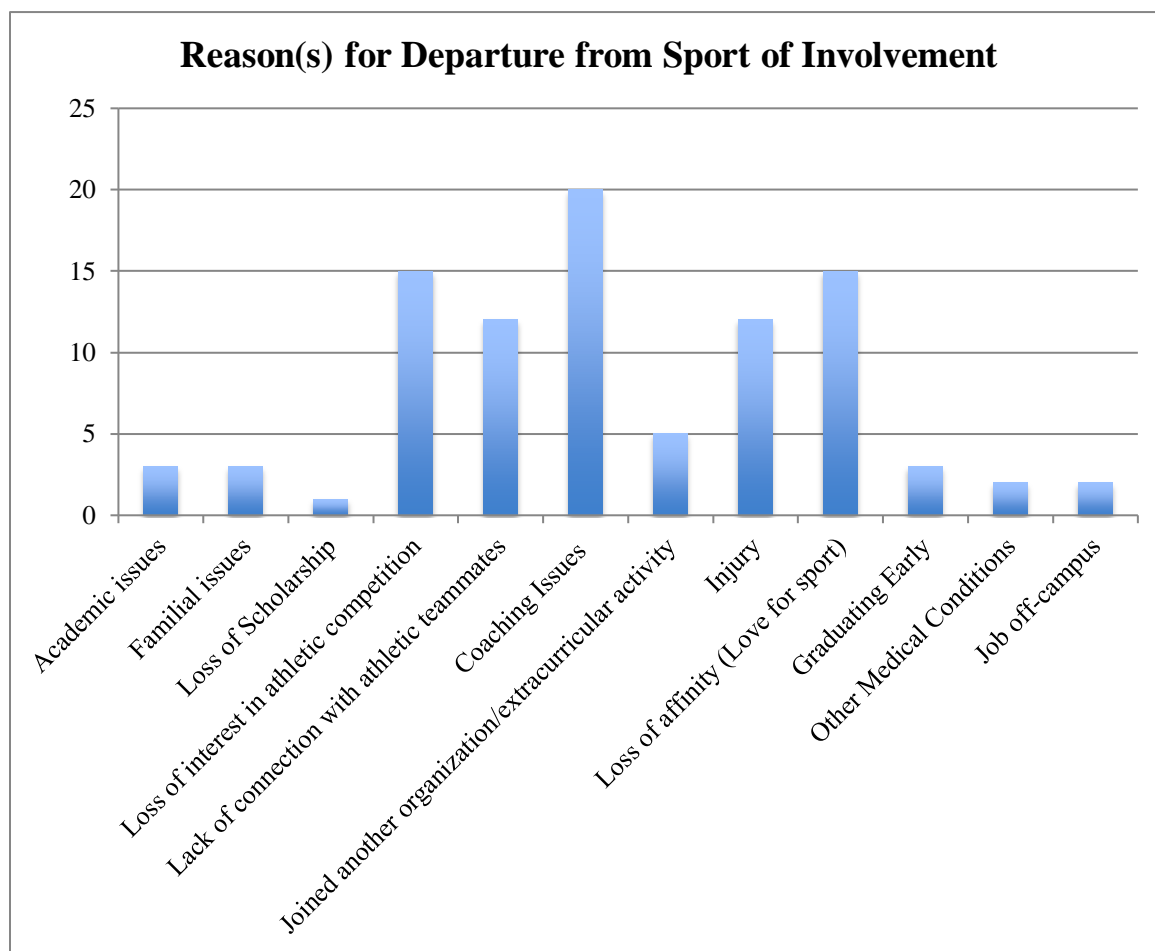


Figure 1. Reason(s) for departure.

In this section, respondents were asked what factors (from a list of 13) influenced their continued enrollment after leaving their sport. After coding responses, the researcher included two additional variables due to the “Other” category to create a total fifteen variables. Based on the data in Table 8, respondents identified friendships built on campus as the primary reason for their persistence at their institution of enrollment. The next two highest rated factors related to student persistence were major/program, with 26 responses, and the quality of professors, with 21. This correlates with other survey data in which respondents placed a higher value on their academic and overall college experience than their athletic experience. Other important aspects contributing to respondents’ persistence was affinity for the school, quality of institution, and proximity to graduation. These factors also emphasized that students chose the institution not simply based on an athletic experience but because of the institution as a whole.

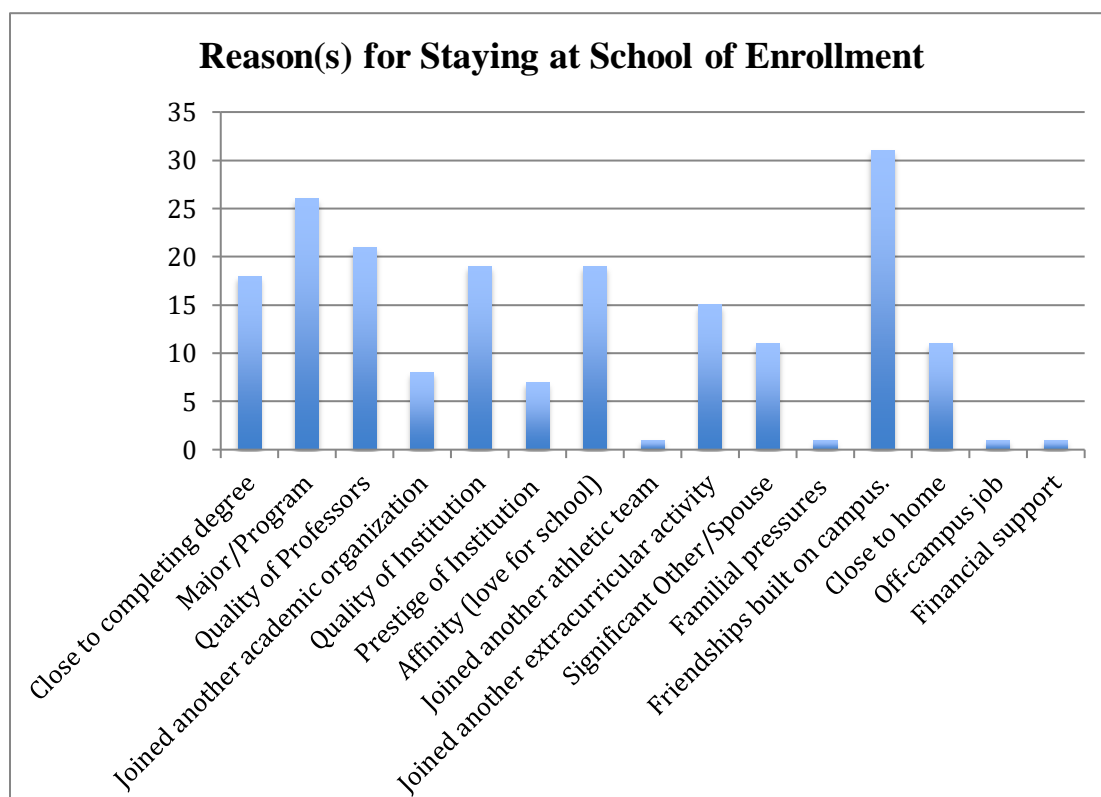


Figure 2. Reason(s) for persistence.

Summary

Overall, the results revealed many interesting themes. The participants identified predominately as White or Caucasian, had high GPAs, and received either a partial scholarship (42.5% of respondents) or no scholarship (55%). In addition, a majority of participants completed 5-7 semesters and were close to graduation. The data supports that participants valued their academics over their athletic career, and, once on campus, their friendships and overall college experience prompted them to stay. Many of these inactive athletes indicated a lack of interest from their coaches, as well as dissatisfaction with the amount of time available to build friendships with non-athletes and the opportunities to participate in non-athletic student organizations. Despite limited participants, the survey results complemented existing literature and revealed implications for athletic departments and other student affairs practitioners.

Chapter 5

Discussion

As stated earlier, this study was rooted largely in two theories: 1) Alexander Astin's 1984 Student Involvement Theory, which refers to the amount of physical and psychological energy a student devotes to the academic experience, and 2) Vincent Tinto's (1993) Model of Institutional Departure, which suggests that, to persist, students need integration in formal and informal academic systems as well as formal and informal social systems. The results of the study aligned with many themes and concepts established in Astin's and Tinto's research. The current study explored why athletes stay at their institution of enrollment after leaving an intercollegiate sports team. The results were limited due to the small sample size, but from the limited data the findings proved consistent with the literature and gave insights into how athletic departments can improve their practices to promote persistence among their athletes. In addition, the research informs how institutions can implement best practices to keep students enrolled.

Discussion

The results showed athletes value their academic experience over their athletic experience whether the experience was positive or negative. Participants almost unanimously strongly agreed with the statement, "It is of importance to me that I get my college degree, even after I have departed my athletic team." In addition, 55% of participants received no athletic scholarship, suggesting they chose the institution due to

academics, with athletics as secondary. When asked if “athletics was the student’s first priority,” the lowest mean score was 1.74. This further highlights the value of the academic experience. When asked about the reasons for remaining enrolled after departing from an athletic team, two of the three highest responses related to academics in regard to the institution’s major/program or quality of professors. All of these responses explicitly indicate participants valuing their academic experience over their athletic experience. Overall, these participants have a high perceived value of their academic experience. According to Tinto (2016), students need to perceive the material as worthwhile for it to be learned and have value to them. Only then are they motivated to engage in the material in ways that promote learning and, in turn, persistence (Tinto, 2016). This data proves congruent with other studies that show student motivation and satisfaction as strong predictors of persistence (Ames, 1992; Caraway et al., 2003; Elliot & Healy, 2001; Tinto, 1988).

The results of the study also showed that participants’ athletic experience substantially affected their time spent at their institution based on their “willingness to re-enroll or persist.” According to Astin (1984/1999), “virtually every significant effect could be rationalized in terms of the involvement concept” (p. 523). More than 57% of participants were in at least the fifth semester at their institution of enrollment, and an additional 15 participants identified “close to completing degree” as a reason for their persistence. Therefore, the participants perceived value in their involvement and investment in college, which led to their persistence due to the proximity to graduation.

The primary reason for participants’ persistence was “friendships built on campus”; 77.5% of participants identified this as the most influential factor. Notably,

participants never specified if these friendships were made in the classroom, in residence halls, or through athletic teams. The data does highlight how important it is for students to integrate into informal social systems such as student organizations or residence halls if they hope to persist (Tinto, 1988). Research also indicates students need to invest time and energy in their personal growth during their college years in order to develop (Astin, 1984/1999). The data suggests the participants' institutions and their time spent building friendships directly correlated with the participants' persistence.

As one of the most distinct findings, half of the participants indicated they left their sport due to "coaching issues." Furthermore, the mean data regarding how participants viewed their coaches' interest in them as "athletes" as well as "students." Coaches are highly influential members of a student athlete's life, spending as much time if not more with student athletes as do classroom instructors. In comparison to coaches, the data revealed participants were satisfied with "instructor interest" in them as a person and very satisfied with "instructor support." This highlights the impact coaches and professors have on the student experiences, impacting learning outcomes either negatively or positively. Higher education should be a well-rounded experience, and it is thus important to encourage student athletes' involvement outside of their sports. The goal is not to detract from their athletic experience but to enhance their overall college experience and increase persistence.

Implications

Future research. Given the exploratory nature and limited sample size of the study at small, private liberal arts institutions in the Midwest, multiple possibilities exist for future research. A larger sample size would allow different opportunities for data

analysis such as comparing differences between schools, race, gender, or sport. This research could also expand to include a mixed-method approach. Researchers could follow up with participants to gain a deeper insight into why they left their sport and what kept them at their institution. Another avenue to pursue could include surveying coaches to discover why they believe student athletes depart from their athletic teams. Further development of the instrument used could also give a more accurate perception of participants' complex viewpoints on their educational and athletic experience.

This research also has implications for junior varsity (JV) rosters. Some institutions use these JV rosters to strengthen enrollment. Typically, JV teams have high turnover rates and consist of athletes who receive no scholarship. There may be many reasons why JV athletes are involved in their respective sport: 1) love for the sport, 2) opportunity to make it to the varsity squad, or 3) or a way to stay involved on campus. The current research is hopeful for these JV rosters; based on the current data, varsity athletes who do not receive scholarships still persist, which can be reflective of JV athletes who leave their athletic team and stay enrolled at their institution.

Future practice. The results of the study have worthwhile implications for practice. If higher education professionals, athletic departments, and coaches want to foster whole-person development and increase persistence rates, a form of evaluation for each respective department must occur. Currently, the research reveals institutions do an excellent job fostering involvement among student affairs departments. Institutions should keep developing student affairs programs such as residence life or student activities. Doing so promotes inclusivity, creates a space for students to feel involved, and gives opportunities to join non-athletic organizations. A potential reason for why

athletes cannot join non-athletic organizations or make non-athlete friends could be the scheduling conflicts between athletic practices and other on-campus organizations. If institutions try to accommodate athletes' schedules, there is greater chance for athletes to get involved and persist if they do depart from their athletic team.

The survey results revealed participants left their sport of involvement due to "coaching issues" and were less than satisfied with their coaches' interest in them as athletes or students. No student should feel their coach lacks interest in them, and as such anything below satisfactory responses is unacceptable. Athletic departments should consider establishing a form of assessment for their coaching staff beyond wins and losses. Potentially, a survey for student athletes could be implemented to improve coaches' performances, allowing them a chance to analyze how they support their athletes. Even professional development funds could be set aside for coaches to take classes or attend coaching conferences in their respective area to further support their growth and development. The goal should ultimately be to support the whole person development of students, not just physically.

The fundamental goal of college is to get an education. Thus, a continuous emphasis on academics needs to occur. The data revealed that participants highly valued their academics. This could be due to the support they received from professors or the high value they placed on their major or program. Moving forward, institutions should continue to hire quality professors who express a deep sense of interest or care for students. Professors and coaches are deeply influential members of the higher education community, and having quality staff is a significant priority towards student persistence.

Limitations

Several limitations exist in the current study. First, the study examined a small subset of small, private liberal arts institutions within the NAIA, and therefore the results may not be representative of all NAIA institutions. Second, the total sample size from each institution was proportionately small, ranging from 5 participants at one institution to 20 at another. Third, there emerged a disparity in demographics; White participants made up approximately 87.5% of the demographics, leading to a lack of representation. Despite these limitations, the study does provide a framework for additional research and gives valuable information to colleges and their respective athletic departments as to the nature of the relationship between student persistence and coaching.

Conclusion

Amid rising tuition costs, declining completion rates, and scandals within intercollegiate athletics, higher education faces difficult times. Athletics are profoundly formative experiences for those who participate and those who support. At some private institutions, student athletes make up half of the student population. The National Student Clearinghouse (NSC) released its annual report, noting that nearly half of students obtain a degree at the first institution they attend within six years of starting college (NSC Research Center, 2018). With almost half of students not persisting, the persistence of student athletes proves of understandable importance.

This study sought to understand why student athletes persist even after they have departed their athletic team and what factors, if any, contribute to the persistence of those inactive athletes. Fortunately, the participants surveyed were not simply another statistic within exit interview data. The data revealed two major findings. First, participants

entered college or stayed enrolled due to the high value they placed on their academic experience, such as major/program, quality of professors, and other forms of investment on campus, such as proximity to gradation, friendships, or love for the school. Secondly, inactive athletes did not feel supported by their coaching staff, and a majority of these students departed due to these issues. The results of the study reaffirmed the research done by Astin (1984/1999) and Tinto (1988) but also uncovered several implications for student affairs and athletic departments to adjust or improve their processes to further promote persistence. With such low persistence within higher education, institutions do well to make concentrated efforts to improve retention and persistence rates.

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Appendix A

Crossroads League Permission

ALEX DEVRIES - Permission to use Crossroads League in Thesis.



Larry M DeSimpelare <commish@crossroadsleague.com>

Wed 4/17/2019 3:20 PM

To: DeVries, Alec

Reply all | v

You forwarded this message on 4/17/2019 4:37 PM

Alec,

I appreciate you sending me the information....

It appears to be a great document with excellent research and information.

Thank you for sharing it. I will keep it on file!

I am not sure you need my permission, but I am aware of the document, and appreciate you requesting my acknowledgement of it.

Congrats and well done!

Larry

Larry M DeSimpelare

COMMISSIONER

CROSSROADS LEAGUE

3648 Truxton Place

Avon, OH 44011

216-952-5689

Appendix B

Kamusoko and Pemberton Survey Permission

Master's Thesis Research



Sibongile Kamusoko <kamusibo@isu.edu>

Fri 4/6, 4:59 PM



Dear Alec

I am granting you permission to use the instrument for your Thesis. All the Best.

Dr Kamusoko

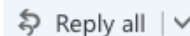
...



DeVries, Alec

Thu 4/5, 10:17 AM

Sibongile Kamusoko <kamusibo@isu.edu> ↵



Dr. Sibongile Kamusoko,

I was looking over your instrument from your dissertation with my Thesis supervisor and we felt that it would work for the depth of my research that I am working. Would it be possible to have permission to use your instrument for my Thesis with a few edits such as, deleting questions that are not relevant to my specific research or changing some language, e.g. ISU to Taylor University.

Let me know your thoughts,

Alec DeVries

Athletics MAHE Graduate Assistant

[236 West Reade Ave.](#)

[Upland](#), IN 46989

Office: 765.998.4705

...

Appendix C

Student-Athlete Satisfaction and Persistence Survey

Student-Athlete Satisfaction & Persistence Survey

Code _____

Dear ISU Student-Athlete: Thank you for agreeing to participate in this survey. Please note that you may withdraw your participation at any time without penalty or consequence. Completing this survey implies your informed consent.

DEMOGRAPHICS: Please mark the response that best describes you.

1.	Gender <input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female <input type="checkbox"/> Transgendered	7.	How many full-time semesters have you completed while at ISU? <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <div> <input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 5 </div> <div> <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 6 </div> </div>
2.	Age <input type="checkbox"/> Under 18 <input type="checkbox"/> 18 years <input type="checkbox"/> 19 years <input type="checkbox"/> 20 years <input type="checkbox"/> 21 years <input type="checkbox"/> 22 years <input type="checkbox"/> Over 22 years	8.	I am currently a: <input type="checkbox"/> Freshman <input type="checkbox"/> Sophomore <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____
3.	Race/Ethnicity <input type="checkbox"/> Asian/Asian American <input type="checkbox"/> Mexican American/Chicano <input type="checkbox"/> Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander <input type="checkbox"/> African/African American <input type="checkbox"/> Latino <input type="checkbox"/> Caucasian/White (non Hispanic) <input type="checkbox"/> Native American/Alaska Native <input type="checkbox"/> Puerto Rican <input type="checkbox"/> Other	9.	I am or have been a redshirt athlete. <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
4.	Please indicate your cumulative graduating High School GPA range: <input type="checkbox"/> Under 2.0 <input type="checkbox"/> 2.0 to 2.4 <input type="checkbox"/> 2.5 to 2.9 <input type="checkbox"/> 3.0 to 3.4 <input type="checkbox"/> 3.5 and above	10.	What is your current athletic-academic standing (as you know it)? I am eligible to: <input type="checkbox"/> Practice, compete, and receive aid <input type="checkbox"/> Practice and receive aid <input type="checkbox"/> Receive aid
5.	Please estimate your current cumulative college GPA range: <input type="checkbox"/> Under 2.0 <input type="checkbox"/> 2.0 to 2.4 <input type="checkbox"/> 2.5 to 2.9 <input type="checkbox"/> 3.0 to 3.4 <input type="checkbox"/> 3.5 and above	11.	What is your athletic support status? <input type="checkbox"/> I receive a full athletic scholarship <input type="checkbox"/> I receive a partial athletic scholarship <input type="checkbox"/> I do not receive athletic scholarship support
6.	Please indicate your major (at least as you plan right now): _____ _____	12.	Please indicate whether or not you plan to graduate from ISU: <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Unsure at this time
7.	Please indicate your current cumulative college GPA range: <input type="checkbox"/> Under 2.0 <input type="checkbox"/> 2.0 to 2.4 <input type="checkbox"/> 2.5 to 2.9 <input type="checkbox"/> 3.0 to 3.4 <input type="checkbox"/> 3.5 and above	13.	What is the primary ISU sport you participate in/play: <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <div> <input type="checkbox"/> Cross Country <input type="checkbox"/> Volleyball <input type="checkbox"/> Basketball <input type="checkbox"/> Track & Field <input type="checkbox"/> Softball </div> <div> <input type="checkbox"/> Soccer <input type="checkbox"/> Football <input type="checkbox"/> Tennis <input type="checkbox"/> Golf </div> </div>
8.	Please indicate your major (at least as you plan right now): _____ _____	14.	Were you recruited to compete in intercollegiate athletics at ISU prior to your attendance at ISU? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

Student-Athlete Satisfaction & Persistence Survey

Code _____

A. Athletic Department Policies and Practice. This set of questions (A1-A15) asks about how you feel regarding Athletic Departmental Policies and Practices in influencing your decision to stay at ISU. **Please indicate your level of satisfaction with the statements below using the following scale:**

Very Dissatisfied (VD) 1
 Dissatisfied (D) 2
 Satisfied (S) 3
 Very Satisfied (VS) 4

	Athletic Departmental Policies and Practices	VD	D	S	VS
A1.	How satisfied are you with the pre-registration advice you received from the ISU athletic department student support services to help you with course selection?	1	2	3	4
A2.	How satisfied are you with the advice you received from the ISU athletic department student support services regarding class scheduling?	1	2	3	4
A3.	How satisfied are you with the usefulness of the information you received during the ISU athletic department student-athlete orientation?	1	2	3	4
A4.	How satisfied are you with the academic goal setting you developed with your ISU athletic department student support services advisor?	1	2	3	4
A5.	How satisfied are you with the time management skills you worked through with your ISU athletic department student support services advisor?	1	2	3	4
A6.	How satisfied are you with the support you received regarding NCAA eligibility requirements from the ISU athletic student support services?	1	2	3	4
A7.	How satisfied are you with the level of guidance you received regarding instructors'/faculty expectations of student-athletes from the ISU athletic department student support services?	1	2	3	4
A8.	How satisfied are you with the information you received from the ISU athletic department student support services regarding the use of academic advising opportunities offered by centers outside of athletics ?	1	2	3	4
A9.	How satisfied are you with the advice you received from the ISU athletic department student support services towards your career development opportunities?	1	2	3	4
A10.	How satisfied are you with the information the ISU athletic department student support services conveyed to you about program tutoring support available outside of athletics (e.g., the Center for Teaching and Learning)?	1	2	3	4
A11.	How satisfied are you with the role the athletic department plays in making sure you attend seminars/workshops on sports nutrition?	1	2	3	4
A12.	How satisfied are you with the role the athletic department plays in making sure you attend seminars/workshops focused on alcoholism and drug abuse?	1	2	3	4
A13.	Overall how satisfied are you with your coaches' interest in you as a student ?	1	2	3	4
A14.	Overall how satisfied are you with your coaches' interest in you as an athlete ?	1	2	3	4
A15.	How satisfied are you with the assistance your ISU athletic department student support services advisor gives you in meeting your academic goals?	1	2	3	4
A16.	How satisfied are you with the importance the athletic department places on setting goals targeted towards your degree completion?	1	2	3	4

Student-Athlete Satisfaction & Persistence Survey

Code _____

A17 and 18. Use of special athletic- academic support services for student-athletes: Indicate your awareness of these services and your use of these services. Check all that apply.

17. Service	Aware and use	Aware don't use	Unaware
Academic Advising			
Class Registration Help			
Academic Counseling			
Tutoring			
Study Hall			

18. Service	Aware and use	Aware don't use	Unaware
Study Skills Classes			
Freshman Seminar			
Technology Assistance			
Computer Labs			
Mentoring			

B. Educational Characteristics: This set of questions asks about how you feel regarding Educational Characteristics in influencing your decision to stay at ISU. Please indicate your level of satisfaction with the statements below using the following scale:

Very Dissatisfied (VD) 1
 Dissatisfied (D) 2
 Satisfied (S) 3
 Very Satisfied (VS) 4

	Educational Characteristics	VD	D	S	VS
B1.	How satisfied are you with the time available for you to meet instructors outside of class time?	1	2	3	4
B2.	How satisfied are you with the interest your instructors show to you as a student?	1	2	3	4
B3.	How satisfied are you with the interest your instructors show to you as a student-athlete?	1	2	3	4
B4.	How satisfied are you with size of classes (student-instructor ratio)?	1	2	3	4
B5.	How satisfied are you with the support you get from your instructors towards meeting your academic goals?	1	2	3	4
B6.	How satisfied are you with the general education requirement guidance you have received?	1	2	3	4
B7.	How satisfied are you with the quality of instruction you are receiving in general education classes?	1	2	3	4
B8.	How satisfied are you with the support you receive from your non-athletic department academic advisor regarding your major (or potential major)?	1	2	3	4
B9.	How satisfied are you with the grading policies at ISU?	1	2	3	4
B10.	How satisfied are you with campus safety?	1	2	3	4
B11.	How satisfied are you with your overall college experience?	1	2	3	4
B12.	How satisfied are you with the way you have fit into the ISU college community?	1	2	3	4
B13.	How satisfied are you with the time you have available to discuss academic issues with non-athletes?	1	2	3	4
B14.	How satisfied are you with the time you have available to build friendly relationships with non-athletes?	1	2	3	4
B15.	How satisfied are you with the way non-athletes include you in study group sessions?	1	2	3	4
B16.	How satisfied are you with your opportunities to participate in positive community service experiences (e.g., PAWS)?	1	2	3	4
B17.	How satisfied are you with your opportunities to participate in nonathletic student organizations?	1	2	3	4

Student-Athlete Satisfaction & Persistence Survey

Code _____

C. Institutional Facilities and Services: This set of questions asks about how you feel regarding ISU/Athletic Institutional Facilities & Services in influencing your decision to stay at ISU. **Please indicate your level of satisfaction with the statements below using the following scale:**

Very Dissatisfied (VD) 1
 Dissatisfied (D) 2
 Satisfied (S) 3
 Very Satisfied (VS) 4
 Or...Check N/A

	Services and Facilities	VD	D	S	VS	N/A
C1.	How satisfied are you with the career counseling services you receive from the Career Center at ISU?	1	2	3	4	
C2.	How satisfied are you with health services offered by the ISU Health Center?	1	2	3	4	
C3.	How satisfied are you with the access you have to computer labs outside of athletics?	1	2	3	4	
C4.	How satisfied are you with the support you get from the ISU library?	1	2	3	4	
C5.	How satisfied are you with the availability of tutoring services offered by the Center for Teaching and Learning?	1	2	3	4	
C6.	How satisfied are you with the availability of campus-wide academic advising outside of Athletics?	1	2	3	4	
C7.	How satisfied are you with your team training facilities?	1	2	3	4	
C8.	How satisfied are you with your sport competition facilities?	1	2	3	4	
C9.	How satisfied are you with the locker rooms facilities for your sport?	1	2	3	4	
C10.	How satisfied are you with the weight training facilities for your sport?	1	2	3	4	

C11. My **primary** sport training facility is:

_____ Holt Arena _____ Reed Gym _____ Davis Field _____ Off Campus

C12. My **primary** sport competition facility is:

_____ Holt Arena _____ Reed Gym _____ Davis Field _____ Off Campus

Student-Athlete Satisfaction & Persistence Survey

Code _____

PERSISTENCE at ISU: This next set of questions asks your intent to persist at ISU. Please **circle** the answer that best represents your response to the statement.

Strongly Disagree (SD) 1
 Disagree (D) 2
 Agree (A) 3
 Strongly Agree (SA) 4

	Willingness to Re-enroll or Persist	SD	D	A	SA
D1.	I intend to enroll at ISU next semester.	1	2	3	4
D2.	I intend to complete my Bachelor's degree at ISU.	1	2	3	4
D3.	It is important to me that I get my college degree.	1	2	3	4
D4.	It is of important to me that I get my college degree, even if I have to continue at ISU after my eligibility expires.	1	2	3	4
D5.	Athletics are my first priority	1	2	3	4
D6.	Academics are my first priority.	1	2	3	4
D7.	My athletic experience is what I expected it to be.	1	2	3	4
D8.	I am satisfied with my athletic performance since coming to ISU.	1	2	3	4
D9.	I am satisfied with my team's athletic performance.	1	2	3	4
D10.	I intend to compete as a student-athlete at ISU next season.	1	2	3	4
D11.	If I had to start all over again, I would attend ISU.	1	2	3	4
D12.	This college is what I expected it to be.	1	2	3	4

D13. STUDENT-ATHLETES: One of the proposals made by the 1991 Knight Foundation Commission on Intercollegiate Athletics (KFCIA) report was that, "student-athletes will be students as well as athletes" (p. 62). Please indicate your level of agreement with this statement.

_____ Strongly Disagree, _____ Disagree, _____ Agree, _____ Strongly Agree.

Please feel free to elaborate or make a comment about this:

D14. STUDENT-ATHLETES & ISU: Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statement. This proposal is consistent with my experience as an ISU student-athlete.

_____ Strongly Disagree, _____ Disagree, _____ Agree, _____ Strongly Agree.

Please feel free to elaborate or make a comment about this:

Please indicate your willingness to participate in a face-to-face follow-up interview, to be scheduled later in THIS semester, after all the written surveys are complete.

Yes ☐

No ☐

If yes please write your contact information below

Name _____

E-mail _____

Appendix D

Student Satisfaction and Persistence Survey

Student-Athlete Satisfaction & Persistence Survey

Dear Student-Athlete: Thank you for agreeing to participate in this survey. Please note that you may withdraw your participation at any time without penalty or consequence.

A. DEMOGRAPHICS: Please mark the response that best describes you.

____ Other

1. Gender

____ Male

____ Female

2. Age

____ 18 years

____ 19 years

____ 20 years

____ 21 years

____ 22 years

____ Over 22 years

4. What is the name of the post-secondary institution you currently attend?

3. I am currently a:

____ Freshman

____ Sophomore

____ Junior

____ Senior

5. How many full-time semesters have you completed while at your current institution?

____ 1 ____ 2

____ 3 ____ 4

____ 5 ____ 6

6. What is the primary sport you did participate in/play:

_____ Cross Country _____ Soccer
 _____ Volleyball

_____ 2.0 to 2.4

_____ Football _____ Basketball _____
 Tennis

_____ 2.5 to 2.9

_____ 3.0 to 3.4

_____ Track & Field _____ Golf _____
 Softball

_____ 3.5 and above

_____ Lacrosse _____ Wrestling _____
 Baseball

10. Please estimate your current
 cumulative college GPA

GPA range:

7. Race/Ethnicity

_____ Under 2.0

_____ Asian/Asian American

_____ 2.0 to 2.4

_____ Mexican American/Chicano

_____ 2.5 to 2.9

_____ Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander

_____ 3.0 to 3.4

_____ African/African American

_____ 3.5 and above

_____ Latino

_____ Caucasian/White (non Hispanic)

_____ Native American/Alaska Native

_____ Puerto Rican

_____ Other

11. Please indicate whether or not you
 plan to
 graduate from your current institution:

_____ Yes

_____ No

8. Please indicate your major (at least as
 you plan right now):

_____ Unsure at this time

12. What is your athletic support status?

9. Please indicate your cumulative
 graduating High School GPA,

_____ I receive a full athletic
 scholarship

GPA range:

_____ I receive a partial athletic
 scholarship

_____ Under 2.0

_____ I do not receive athletic
 scholarship support

B. Educational Characteristics: This set of questions asks about how you feel regarding Educational Characteristics in influencing your decision to stay at your institution of enrollment. Please indicate your level of satisfaction with the statements below using the following scale:

Very Dissatisfied (VD) 1

Dissatisfied (D) 2

Satisfied (S) 3

Very Satisfied (VS) 4

Or Check N/A

	Educational Characteristics	V D	D	S	V S	N/ A
1.	How satisfied are you with the interest your instructors show to you as a student-athlete?	1	2	3	4	
2.	How satisfied are you with size of classes (student-instructor ratio)?	1	2	3	4	
3.	How satisfied are you with the support you get from your instructors towards meeting your academic goals?	1	2	3	4	
4.	How satisfied are you with the quality of instruction you are receiving in general education classes?	1	2	3	4	
5.	How satisfied are you with the grading policies at your institution?	1	2	3	4	
6.	How satisfied are you with campus safety?	1	2	3	4	
7.	How satisfied are you with your overall college experience?	1	2	3	4	
8.	How satisfied are you with the way you have fit into the college community?	1	2	3	4	
9.	How satisfied are you with the time you have available to build friendships with non-athletes?	1	2	3	4	
10.	How satisfied are you with your opportunities to participate in nonathletic student organizations?	1	2	3	4	

C. Institutional Facilities and Services: This set of questions asks about how you feel regarding your institution's services, such as academic and career services, coaching staff, on-campus facilities, etc.

Institutional Facilities & Services in influencing your decision to stay at your institution. Please indicate your level of satisfaction with the statements below:

	Services and Facilities	V D	D	S	V S	N/ A
1.	How satisfied are you with the career counseling services you receive from the Career Center at your institution?	1	2	3	4	
2.	Overall how satisfied are you with your coach's interest in you as a student?	1	2	3	4	
3.	Overall how satisfied are you with your coach's interest in you as an athlete?	1	2	3	4	
4.	How satisfied are you with the support you get from your institution's library staff?	1	2	3	4	
5.	How satisfied are you with the availability of tutoring services offered by your institution?	1	2	3	4	
7.	How satisfied are you with your team training facilities?	1	2	3	4	
8.	How satisfied are you with your sport competition facilities?	1	2	3	4	
9.	How satisfied are you with the locker rooms facilities for your sport?	1	2	3	4	
10.	How satisfied are you with the weight training facilities for your sport?	1	2	3	4	

D. PERSISTENCE: This next set of questions asks your intent to persist at your institution of enrollment. Please circle the answer that best represents your response to the statement.

Strongly Disagree (SD) 1

Disagree (D) 2

Agree (A) 3

Strongly Agree (SA) 4

	Willingness to Re-enroll or Persist	S D	D	A	S A
1.	It is important to me that I get my college degree.	1	2	3	4
2.	I intend to complete my Bachelors degree.	1	2	3	4
3.	I intend to enroll at this college/university next semester.	1	2	3	4
4.	It is of important to me that I get my college degree, even after I have departed my athletic team.	1	2	3	4
5 .	Athletics were my first priority.	1	2	3	4
6 .	Academics are my first priority.	1	2	3	4
7 .	My athletic experience is what I expected it to be.	1	2	3	4
8 .	I am satisfied with my athletic performance since coming to my institution of enrollment.	1	2	3	4
9 .	If I had to start all over again, I would attend my school of enrollment	1	2	3	4
1 0 .	This college is what I expected it to be.	1	2	3	4

1. When did you depart from your athletic team? (Approximate Date: e.g. 10/15/18)

2. What were the reason(s) for your departure from your sport of involvement? (**Check all that apply**)

_____ Academic issues

_____ Familial issues

_____ Loss of Scholarship

_____ Loss of interest in athletic competition

_____ Lack of connection with athletic teammates

_____ Coaching Issues

_____ Joined another athletic team

_____ Joined another organization/extracurricular activity

_____ Injury

_____ Cut from Team

_____ Loss of affinity (Love for sport)

Other. _____

3. What were the reason(s) for staying at your school of enrollment after departing from your sport of original involvement? (**Check all that apply**)

Academic

- ☐ Close to completing degree
- ☐ Major/Program
- ☐ Quality of Professors
- ☐ Joined another academic organization (e.g. honor society, or club)
- ☐ Quality of Institution
- ☐ Prestige of Institution

Other

Social

- ☐ Affinity (love for school)
- ☐ Joined another athletic team
- ☐ Joined another extracurricular activity (e.g. intramurals, student government, or fraternity)
- ☐ Significant Other/Spouse
- ☐ Familial pressures
- ☐ Friendships built on campus.
- ☐ Close to home

Other

